

London Mills Bridge:
Spanning Spoon River
London Mills

Knox(Fulton)County
Illinois

HAER No. IL-11

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

London Mills Bridge

Location: Spanning the Spoon River at London Mills, Ill. at the Knox-Fulton County Line on Knox County Highway 39; most of the bridge lies in Fulton County, NW $\frac{1}{4}$ Sec. 3 T8N, R2E, 4th P.M.; the north part of bridge lies in Knox County, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ Sec. 34, T9N, R2E, 4th P.M.

Date of Construction: 1883

Present Owner: Knox and Fulton Counties;
Knox County Courthouse
Galesburg, Ill. 61401
and
Fulton County Courthouse
Lewistown, Ill. 61542

Present Use: One lane bridge for vehicles, open to maximum load at 6 ton and so posted.

Significance: The London Mills Bridge is a through pratt truss constructed by King Iron & Bridge Co. of Cleveland, Ohio.

Historian: Jack A. Witt
March, 1983.

The bridge known as London Mills Bridge carries traffic from Knox County Highway 39 across the Spoon River into London Mills in Young Hickory Township in Fulton County. Many similar bridges were built in the era of 1880-1905.

It is a through Pratt truss bridge consisting of 8- 16.25' panels with eye bar and pin connections= 130' main Span with wooden floor, supported on two stone piers; the South approach span is a pony truss 27'-6" long with wooden floor supported on the one stone pier and stone abutment; the North approach span was a steel trestle of 5- 20'-I beam spans=100' with concrete floor; width is 13' clear and height of 20' for main span. Portions of the concrete deck of the north approach fell in and the bridge was closed for a time. It was repaired and opened again for light traffic. Again portions of the deck fell in. The steel stringers were rusted through, and for safety we removed the 100' north approach and replaced it with earth fill and crushed stone surface, thus enabling the 6-ton load limit to be re-established, as determined by the Illinois Department of Transportation. Loaded school buses and the fire truck cannot use the bridge.

The present bridge replaced an earlier one that had been washed away during a flood. The minutes of the Fulton County Board dated February 22, 1883 page 573, contains a petition for the bridge replacement. A three member committee met with a Knox County Board Committee empowered to have a bridge constructed. Young Hickory Township of Fulton County was to pay for the stone piers. The bridge was constructed in 1883 by the King Iron & Bridge Co. Cleveland, Ohio, a well known company at that time. Unfortunately, we have been unable to find any plans of the bridge. We are including three pages of sketches made about 1973 by Clay Voorhees, Engineering Technician of this office. *

*See fieldnotes for sketches.

A new bridge is now necessary to carry wider and heavier traffic. The present site is the most desirable since it brings traffic into the business district on a concrete pavement which is maintained by the State of Illinois, and is the only concrete pavement in the Village of London Mills. Since the proposed bridge is in the same location, it will be necessary to remove the present bridge. It has served the community well. Plans have been prepared for a three span precast prestressed replacement bridge, 195'-3" long and 28' wide.